

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Withdrawn) An electric bending endoscope comprising:

a bending portion arranged to an inserting portion;

a first unit which has a frame unit which holds a motor that generates driving force for bending the bending portion, the frame unit being connected to a cord for supplying a signal for driving the motor from a bending control device; and

a buffering member to connect a main frame to which is connected the inserting portion and the frame unit, the buffering member has a first end connected to the frame unit and a second end connected to the main frame, so that a force applied to the inserting portion by an external operation may be absorbed between the first end and the second end.

2-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Withdrawn) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 1, further comprising an operating portion connected to the first unit for operating the electric bending endoscope,

wherein, in an operating lever arranged to the operating portion, an angle is formed between the center axis of the inserting portion in the electric bending endoscope and the center axis of the operating lever at the neutral position thereof, and the angle is in a range of about 120° to 150°,

an inclined angle of the operating lever is $\pm 30^\circ$ from the center of the operating lever, and

the inclined center position of the operating lever is arranged in front of the operating portion, with respect to the center axis of the inserting portion in the electric bending endoscope.

9. (Withdrawn) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 8, wherein the operation lever is arranged such that an angle is formed between the center axis of the operation lever at the neutral position thereof and the operating directions of an operating switch including at least an air and water supply button and a suction button, and the angle is 30° or more.

10-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Withdrawn) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 8, wherein the operating portion is provided with a switch for operating the electric bending endoscope.

16. (Withdrawn) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 15, wherein the unit comprises an inner frame for holding the motor and an outer frame for holding the inner frame.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) An electric bending endoscope comprising:
a bending portion arranged to an inserting portion;
a first unit which has a frame unit which holds a motor that generates driving force for bending the bending portion, the frame unit being connected to a cord for supplying a signal for driving the motor from a bending control device;

a second unit which is separable from the first unit and which has a transmitting member for transmitting the driving force of the motor to the bending portion, the second unit having a main frame to which is connected the inserting portion; and

~~a buffering member to connect the main frame and the frame unit, the buffering member has a first end connected to the frame unit and a second end connected to the main frame, so that a force applied to the inserting portion by an external operation may be absorbed between the first end and the second end~~ that is a plate member, the buffering member being connected to the frame unit at a first portion of the plate member and to the main frame at a second portion of the plate member, an intermediate portion between the first portion and the second portion of the plate member being arranged to traverse across a junction between the first unit and the second unit, the buffering member absorbing a force applied to the inserting portion by an external operation between the first portion connected to the frame unit and the second portion connected to the main frame.

19. (Previously Presented) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 18, wherein the first unit has a frame unit which comprises an inner frame for holding the motor and an outer frame for holding the inner frame.

20. (Previously Presented) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 19, wherein the buffering member further includes a fixing member which fixes the inner frame of the first unit and a main frame arranged to the second unit.

21. (Previously Presented) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 20, wherein the frame unit and the main frame are fixed via the fixing member by using a positioning tool for positioning in a three-axial direction.

22. (Previously Presented) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 18, further comprising an operating portion connected to the first unit for operating the electric bending endoscope,

wherein a wheel is arranged to the driving force transmitting member of the second unit, and a rotating shaft of the wheel is arranged in front of the operating portion on a side cross-section of the operating portion in the electric bending endoscope, with respect to a central axis of the inserting portion.

23. (Previously Presented) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 18, further comprising an operating portion connected to the first unit for operating the electric bending endoscope,

wherein, in an operation lever arranged to the operating portion, an angle is formed between a center axis of the inserting portion in the electric bending endoscope and the center axis of the operation lever at the neutral position thereof, and the angle is in a range of about 120° to 150°,

an inclined angle of the operating lever is $\pm 30^\circ$ from the center of the operating lever, and

the inclined center position of the operation lever is arranged in front of the operating portion, with respect to the center axis of the inserting portion in the electric bending endoscope.

24. (Previously Presented) The electric bending endoscope according to Claim 23, wherein the operation lever is arranged such that an angle is formed between the center axis of the operation lever at the neutral position thereof and the operating direction of an

operating switch including at least an air and water supply button and a suction button, and the angle is 30° or more.

25. (Currently Amended) An electric bending endoscope comprising:

a bending portion arranged to an inserting portion;

a first unit which has a frame unit which holds a motor that generates driving force for bending the bending portion, the frame unit being connected to a cord for supplying a signal for driving the motor from a bending control device; and

~~a buffering member to connect a main frame to which is connected the inserting portion and the frame unit, the main frame and frame unit being separable, the buffering member has a first end connected to the frame unit and a second end connected to the main frame, so that a force applied to the inserting portion by an external operation may be absorbed between the first end and the second end~~ that is a plate member, the buffering member being connected to the frame unit at a first portion of the plate member and to the main frame to which is connected the inserting portion at a second portion of the plate member, an intermediate portion between the first portion and the second portion of the plate member being arranged to traverse across a junction between the first unit and the second unit, the main frame and the frame unit being separable, the buffering member absorbing a force applied to the inserting portion by an external operation between the first portion connected to the frame unit and the second portion connected to the main frame.

26. (Previously Presented) An electric bending endoscope comprising:

a bending portion arranged to an inserting portion;

a first unit which has a frame unit which holds a motor unit that generates driving force for bending the bending portion, the frame unit being connected to a cord for supplying a signal for driving the motor unit from a bending control device; and

a main frame to which is connected the inserting portion and the frame unit, the main frame having a gear unit, the gear unit being separable from the motor unit of the frame unit such that one of the gear unit and motor unit can be replaced without replacing the other of the gear unit and motor unit.

27. (Currently Amended) An electric bending endoscope comprising:

a bending portion arranged to an inserting portion;

a first unit which has a frame unit which holds a motor that generates driving force for bending the bending portion, the frame unit being connected to a cord for supplying a signal for driving the motor from a bending control device;

a second unit which is separable from the first unit and which has a transmitting member for transmitting the driving force of the motor to the bending portion, the second unit having a main frame to which is connected the inserting portion; and

~~a buffering member to separably connect the main frame and the frame unit, the buffering member has a first end connected to the frame unit and a second end connected to the main frame, so that a force applied to the inserting portion by an external operation may be absorbed between the first end and the second end~~ that is a plate member, the buffering member being connected to the frame unit at a first portion of the plate member and to the main frame at a second portion of the plate member, an intermediate portion between the first portion and the second portion of the plate member being arranged to traverse across a junction between the first unit and the second unit, the buffering member absorbing a force

applied to the inserting portion by an external operation between the first portion connected to the frame unit and the second portion connected to the main frame.

28. (Withdrawn) An electric bending endoscope comprising:

a bending portion arranged to an inserting portion;

a first unit which has a frame unit which holds a motor unit that generates driving force for bending the bending portion, the frame unit being connected to a cord for supplying a signal for driving the motor unit from a bending control device; and

a second unit which is separable from the first unit and which has a gear unit for transmitting the driving force of the motor to the bending portion, the second unit having a main frame to which is connected the inserting portion;

wherein the gear unit is separable from the motor unit of the frame unit such that one of the gear unit and motor unit can be replaced without replacing the other of the gear unit and motor unit.